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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [KU](#) [NATIONAL](#) [ASSEMBLY](#) [FREEDOM](#) [AGENDA](#)  
SUBJECT: PARLIAMENT TO GRILL RULING FAMILY MINISTER

REF: 06 KUWAIT 4665

Classified By: DCM Matt Tueller for reason 1.4 (d)

¶1. (SBU) On January 17, three Members of Parliament (MPs) formally submitted a request to question Minister of Health Shaykh Ahmed Abdullah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah over procedural irregularities in approving Kuwaitis for medical treatment abroad, alleged "administrative violations" in the ministry, and the overall deterioration of health service in Kuwait. Shaykh Ahmed is the nephew of the Amir and Crown Prince, and the cousin of the Prime Minister. The questioning of ministers, commonly referred to here as a "grilling," is a right guaranteed to Parliament by the Constitution. Two of the MPs who submitted the request, Jamaan Al-Hirbish and Dr. Waleed Al-Tabtabaei, are members of Parliament's Islamic Bloc; Al-Hirbish is also a member of the Islamic Constitutional Bloc (ICM), the political arm of the Kuwaiti Muslim Brotherhood. The other MP, Ahmed Al-Shihoumi, was until recently a member of Parliament's Popular Action Bloc, but has reportedly withdrawn due to the bloc's opposition to the grilling. In December, Mohammed Al-Sanousi resigned as Minister of Information rather than face an intrusive parliamentary grilling (reftel).

¶2. (C/NF) Comment: Shaykh Ahmed's close ties to the inner circle of the Al-Sabah family suggest his grilling could cross a red line. At the very least, it is likely to significantly increase the already high tensions between the Government and Parliament. With one minister already forced out and more grillings rumored likely, some suspect the Amir may move to contain this increasingly assertive Parliament. In November, there were widespread rumors that he was considering dissolving Parliament for a period of up to three years, which, while unconstitutional, has happened twice before. Since Parliament reconvened in October, Kuwaitis have grown increasingly frustrated with both Parliament and the Government for failing to pass much needed reforms. Some have privately suggested that dissolving Parliament would be a means of overcoming this deadlock.

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